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SUPPORT BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM OF THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENTS TO PROMOTE AND CONSOLIDATE NEW OR RESTORED DEMOCRACIES

OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 29 August 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 29 August 1997 concerning the invitation to tender issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation relating to the Kazakh sector of the Caspian Sea (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter and its annex as an official document of the General Assembly under items 38, 39, 99, 100 and 101 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Akmaral Kh. ARISTANBEKOVA
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the
United Nations

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

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ANNEX

Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan on 29 August 1997

It is now public knowledge that the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation has invited tenders for the exploitation of the mineral resources of the Caspian Sea. It is planned to announce the results of the invitation to tender in October 1997 in the town of Gelendzhik.

It is clear from the specifications of the invitation to submit tenders that some of the areas involved lie partly within the Kazakh sector of the Caspian Sea. This sector has been determined on the basis of the principle of delimiting the sea-bed along the median line.

Kazakhstan welcomes the desire of the States bordering the Caspian Sea to take practical steps for the development of the hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian Sea and does not rule out the possibility of exploiting jointly with them the deposits in the Kazakh sector of the Caspian shelf. However, such activities must be carried out on the basis of respect for the legitimate rights of the States bordering on the Caspian Sea in accordance with the norms and principles of international law.

The inclusion in the invitation to submit tenders of areas lying within the Kazakh sector of the Caspian Sea is contrary to the joint statement on cooperation in the use of the Caspian Sea issued by the Presidents of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation on 27 April 1997, in which the two sides undertook to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States bordering on the Caspian Sea in conducting activities in the Caspian Sea.

In the view of Kazakhstan, the above-mentioned actions by the Russian Federation complicate the search for a mutually acceptable settlement of the question of the legal status of the Caspian Sea.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is authorized to express strong opposition to this invitation to submit tenders, to state that activities undertaken unilaterally in the territory of Kazakhstan without the latter's agreement are unacceptable and to draw attention to the need to reconsider the decisions that have been taken in this regard. A response along these lines would demonstrate respect for the legitimate rights and interests of all the States bordering on the Caspian Sea and the willingness to solve problems which arise by means of negotiation.